

Message Text

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ACTION SWF-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 AID-20 EB-11 AGR-20 NEA-14 FEA-02

CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00

XMB-07 OPIC-12 SP-03 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2770

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EAID

SUBJ: FERTILIZER POLICY

REF: TOKYO 7204

1. ACCORDING JAPANESE PRESS, AGRICULTURE FORESTRY MINISTER KURAISHI, UPON HIS RETURN FROM TRIP TO SOUTHEAST ASIA JUNE 10, MADE VAGUE BUT SYMPATHETIC REMARKS CONCERNING PROBLEMS FACING SEA COUNTRIES IN INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, IN PARTICULAR FERTILIZER SHORTAGE. PRESS JUNE 15 INDICATED KURAISHI INTENDED SUGGEST TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER NAKASONE THAT LATTER EXERT GUIDANCE OVER JAPANESE FERTILIZER INDUSTRY TO EXPAND PRODUCTION OF CHEMICAL FERTILIZER AND EXPORTS TO SEA. PRESS INDICATED FERTILIZER INDUSTRY OPPOSED TO THIS IDEA FOR REASONS REPORTED REFTEL. IT REPORTED INDUSTRY'S IDEA THAT BY DRAWING ON DOMESTIC INVENTORIES AND STOCKPILES, EXPORTS MIGHT BE INCREASED.

2. MITI AND INDUSTRY SOURCE (OFFICIAL OF JAPAN AMMONIUM SULPHATE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION -- JASIA) STILL DECLINE TO PROVIDE DETAILED INFO ON LIKELY JAPANESE CHEMICAL FERTILIZER EXPORTS TO VARIOUS COUNTRIES, OR PRICES, BUT HAVE PROVIDED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

A) ACCORDING TO JASIA REP, JASIA HAS NOT DECIDED WHETHER

TO FORMALLY SUGGEST TO MITI THAT INVENTORIES AND STOCKPILES BE REDUCED. REPORTEDLY, IDEA IN SOME INDUSTRY CIRCLES IS THAT STOCKS COULD BE REDUCED PRESENT LEVEL OF 2.2 MONTHS' SUPPLY (JASIA ESTIMATE) TO SLIGHTLY LESS THAN ONE MONTHS'S SUPPLY. (MITI ESTIMATES CURRENT PRODUCER UREA STOCKS AT 520,000 MT.)

B) MITI REP (YAMAURA, CHEMICAL FERTILIZER DIVISION) SAID MITI NOT NOW CONSIDERING REDUCTION OF STOCKS.

C) JASIA REP ALSO TOLD EMBASSY THAT, THOUGH NEGOTIATIONS WITH CONSUMER COUNTRIES STILL CONTINUING, CONTRACTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONCLUDED WITH BOTH INDIA AND INDONESIA TO PROVIDE EACH WITH 150,000 METRIC TONS OF UREA DURING FIRST HALF OF 1974 FERTILIZER YEAR. (INDIA CONTRACTED FOR 400,000 MT OF JAPANESE UREA DURING THE 1973 FERTILIZER YEAR - JULY THROUGH JUNE - AND INDONESIA FOR 320,000 MT. JAPANESE EXPORTS AS OF THE END OF APRIL WERE 269,051 MT TO INDIA AND 279,185 MT TO INDONESIA.)

3. ACCORDING TO NIHON KEIZAI SHINBUN OF JUNE 19, MITI ESTIMATES 1974 FERTILIZER YEAR EXPORTS OF AMMONIUM SULPHATE WILL BE 700,000 TONS, DOWN FROM 892,000 TONS IN 1973 FY, AND 1974 FY EXPORTS OF UREA WILL BE 2,000,000 TONS, DOWN FROM 2,379,000 TONS IN 1973 FY. MITI DECLINED TO CONFIRM THESE ESTIMATES.
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